

# The Muslim West | Mosques: A Place for Prayer

## The prayer room

Mosques are not temples or 'houses of God', and no liturgical acts are performed in them. They are a place for prayer and meditation, and a meeting place. Believers come to the mosque to perform their ritual, mandatory prayers with others, although private prayer is also practised. Believers face the qibla when praying, bowing when necessary and reciting verses from the Qur'an. Mosques are also centres for training and learning. In the weekly sermon given during Friday prayers, the imam discusses a specific religious theme recited from the minbar (pulpit) and, outside prayer times, the learned can give conferences on theological or scientific topics.



**Name:**  
Almohad Mosque of the Kasbah

**Dynasty:**  
Hegira 633 / AD 1235 Hafsid

**Details:**  
Tunis, Tunisia

**Justification:**  
Despite its simplicity, the prayer room offers some degree of comfort, furnished with esparto mats, rugs and lamps, which faintly illuminate the room. The prayer-room furniture typically includes two important components: the minbar from which the imam delivers Friday prayers, and the case in which the Qur'an is kept.



**Name:**  
Lamp

**Dynasty:**  
Hegira 705 / AD 1305 Nasrid

**Details:**  
National Archaeological Museum  
Madrid, Spain

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**Name:**  
Great lantern of al-Mu'izz

**Dynasty:**  
Hegira 424–43 / AD 1032–51 Fatimid–Zirid

**Details:**  
Museum of Islamic Art  
Raqqada, Kairouan, Tunisia

**Justification:**  
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**Name:**

Minbar

**Dynasty:**

Hegira 532 / AD 1137 (commenced) Almoravid

**Details:**

Badi Palace  
Marrakesh, Morocco

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**Name:**

Prayer pulpit (minbar)

**Dynasty:**

Hegira 490 / AD 1097 Almoravid

**Details:**

National Museum of Antiquities and Islamic Arts  
Algiers, Algeria

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**Name:**

Maghrebi rab'a

**Dynasty:**

Hegira 745 / AD 1344 Marinid

**Details:**

Islamic Museum, al-Aqsa Mosque / al-Haram al-Sharif  
Jerusalem

**Justification:**

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